Board(OSPCB) has issued direction to NALCO on 10.11.2009 with respect to ash management in Captive Power Plant(CPP) under Section 33A of Water(Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and Section 31A of Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

(c) NALCO has taken the following measures for ash management:

(i) Raising the dykes of ash ponds from 104 Meter Reduced Level(MRL) to 107 MRL to increase the life of the ponds.

(ii) For ash disposal into abandoned coal mines of Mahanadi Coalfields Limited(MCL), NALCO has obtained provisional clearance from MCL management to transport ash to Bharatpur (South) abandoned coal mines, Talcher Coal Field, Angul.

(iii) Additional 46 acre of land adjacent to ash pond No. 2 has been acquired for disposal of ash by high concentration slurry disposal mode at a later date.

(iv) Infrastructure has already been developed to dispose ash on the existing ash pond of Captive Power Plant by high concentration slurry disposal system for the new units No. 7 to 10 which will accommodate more ash per unit land area, over and above the disposal of ash by lean slurry method.

(d) NALCO has reported that OSPCB on behalf of State Government of Orissa has issued direction to the Company to comply to the conditions and is monitoring compliance through Regional Office of OSPCB, Angul.

Mineral deposits in North Eastern States

2705.SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there exist rich mineral stocks in the North Eastern States;

(b) whether the minerals including Uranium remain un-extracted;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the tribals are opposed to extraction activities in Khasi and Jaintia hills;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the manner in which Government is pursuing the matter?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) As per available information, fairly good Uranium deposit have been identified in the State of Meghalaya. Extraction is subject to statutory clearances. State-wise information on reserves/resources of minerals in the country is given in the Indian Mineral Year Book published by Indian Bureau of Mines, a copy of which has been supplied to the Parliament Library. Mining of minerals depends broadly on availability of mineral resources, economic viability, demand of the market etc. Under the liberalised economic environment, investment decisions, including choice of location, are taken by the entrepreneurs based on their techno-economic judgements and commercial considerations.

(d) and (e) As per available information, while most of the tribals have welcomed the mining projects, few NGOs are opposing the Uranium mining on the grounds of influx of outsiders into Meghalaya and perceived health hazards in the adjoining areas.

(f) The Government has undertaken Awareness Programme to clear the misconceptions and addressing the economic and environmental concerns.

Allocation of iron-ore mines to public/private steel plants

2706. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated iron-ore reserves in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether Government has allocated iron-ore mines to public/private sector steel plants;

(c) if so, the details thereof, steel plant-wise;

(d) whether any steel player has acquired more than the allocated area;

(e) if so, the details thereof along with the action proposed/taken in this regard; and

(f) the balance of iron ore reserves after allocation?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) State-wise information on reserves/resources of iron ore is given in the Indian Minerals Year Book, published by the Indian Bureau of Mines, a copy of which is supplied to the Parliament Library on regular basis.

(b) and (c) The details of prior approval conveyed by Central Government for grant of mining lease including to public/private sector steel plants are available on the Ministry of Mines website (http://mines.gov.in/).

(d) to (f) State Governments grant mining leases as the owner of the minerals. No such report of any steel plant acquiring more than the area approved by the Central Govt. has come to the notice of Government.

Iron ore reserves

†2707. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 2415 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 24th July, 2009 and state:

(a) the estimated quantum of iron ore reserves in the country and keeping in view the present pace of mining, how long it will last;

(b) whether the demand of iron ore is likely to increase for domestic consumption; and

---

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.